

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4 -13 are currently pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1 and 7 have been amended. No new matter will be entered in the application via these amendments. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

1. Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beckwith (US 2,570,191) in view of Asaoka (JP 05169906). Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1 and 7 are patentably distinct from the cited references.

The subject application discloses a housing body having a pair axle brackets each coupled to the base frame wherein one of the axle brackets has a thick portion projecting toward the housing body formed therein such that the distal end of the thick portion is in contact with one of the left side surface and the right side surface of a convex repulsive force receiving member and having a fastener for directly coupling the body of the differential housing integrally with that axle bracket. Since the axle bracket 26a is fixed to the side member 28 of the base frame, in the case where the drive repulsive force occurs for rotating the axle housing 20 back and forth, the drive repulsive force is received by the repulsive force receiving portion 48 on the differential housing 22 and the repulsive force receiving bolt 46 supported by the axle bracket 26a so that the rotation of the axle housing 20 is prevented. See, Specification at pg. 8. In addition to preventing the rotation of the axle housing such an arrangement facilitates an assembly without requiring severe dimensional precision because the restriction of the positional relationship between the through holes 50 and 52 is performed by only three components, i.e. the axle bracket 26a, the axle tube 24 and the body 22a of the differential housing 22. See, Specification at pgs. 9-10.

Amended independent claims 1 and 7 have been amended to recite, *inter alia*:

1. An axle housing assembly capable of being supported by a vehicle's base frame comprising:

an axle housing having a differential housing and a cover attached to the differential housing, said differential housing having an integrally formed housing body and being provided with a pair of axle tubes fixed to said differential housing within said housing body;

support means including a pair of axle brackets each having a ring portion wherein said pair of axle brackets are fitted on said pair of axle tubes adapted for mounting said axle housing to the base frame by coupling each axle bracket to the base frame wherein a thick portion projecting toward said housing body is formed on one of said pair of axle brackets such that the distal end of said thick portion is in contact with one of the left side surface and the right side surface of a convex repulsive force receiving member; and

said convex repulsive force receiving member provided on the body of said differential housing wherein a through hole is formed in a parallel with the axle tubes for receiving a fastener for directly coupling the body of said differential housing integrally with an axle bracket, wherein

said differential housing is substantially centered between said pair of axle brackets.

7. An axle housing assembly capable of being supported by a vehicle's base frame comprising:

an axle housing having a differential housing and a cover attached to the differential housing, said differential housing having an integrally formed housing body and being provided with a pair of axle tubes fixed to said differential housing within said housing body;

support brackets each having a ring portion wherein said support brackets are fitted on said pair of axle tubes for supporting said axle housing on the base frame by coupling each axle bracket to the base frame; and

a convex repulsive force receiving member extending generally vertically from the body of said differential housing wherein a through hole is formed in parallel with the axle tubes for receiving a fastener for coupling the body of said differential housing integrally with at least one of said support brackets wherein a thick portion projecting toward said housing body is formed on one of said pair of axle brackets such that the distal end of said thick portion is in contact with the left side surface of the convex repulsive force receiving member, said fastener extending

through said through hole and securing together the convex repulsive force receiving member and said one support bracket, wherein

said differential housing is substantially centered between said support brackets.

Applicants respectfully submit that Beckwith fails to disclose or suggest a housing body having a pair axle brackets each coupled to the base frame wherein one of the axle brackets has a thick portion projecting toward the housing body formed therein such that the distal end of the thick portion is in contact with one of the left side surface and the right side surface of a convex repulsive force receiving member and having a fastener for directly coupling the body of the differential housing integrally with that axle bracket. Asaoka does nothing to remedy this deficiency.

Beckwith does not disclose or suggest an axle housing assembly as recited in independent claims 1 and 7. To the contrary, Beckwith discloses a detachable driving axle unit wherein each driving axle 5 is mounted in an axle housing 12. See, Fig. 1; col. 3, lns. 15-16. Each axle housing 12, in turn is fastened to the differential gear housing 17 through the supporting and bearing plate 11 by bolts 14. See, col. 3, lns. 18-34. The axle housings 12 are directly connected to the frame member brackets C by bolts 35. See, col. 4, lns. 29-53. Thus, not only does Beckwith fail to disclose or suggest an axle housing assembly wherein the axle brackets are fitted on the axle tubes for mounting the axle housing to the base frame by coupling each axle bracket to the base frame, the axle assembly disclosed does not directly couple the body of the differential housing integrally with an axle bracket.

Without admitting that it is proper to combine Beckwith with Asaoka, Applicants respectfully submit that no combination of the elements taught by these two references achieves the axle housing recited in claims 1, 2, 4-10 and 12-13. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this ground of rejection.

2. Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beckwith (US 2,570,191) in view of Pegg (U.S. Patent No. 5,175,665). Claim 11 depends indirectly from independent claim 7. Independent claim 7 has been amended similarly to independent claim 1.

As discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that Beckwith fails to disclose or suggest a housing body having a pair axle brackets each coupled to the base frame wherein one of the axle brackets has a thick portion projecting toward the housing body formed therein such that the distal end of the thick portion is in contact with one of the left side surface and the right side surface of a convex repulsive force receiving member and having a fastener for directly coupling the body of the differential housing integrally with that axle bracket. Neither, Pegg nor Asaoka does anything to remedy this deficiency. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 is patentably distinct from the cited references.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

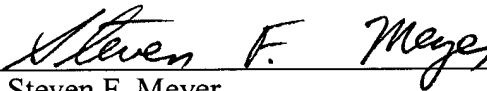
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 5000-4679. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 5000-4679. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

Respectfully submitted,
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